EDRD 632 Literacy Assessments and Interventions for Groups

Advanced Studies in Teaching & Learning—Master of Education Program
Fall 2009

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Office Hours: By appointment

DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on literacy assessments and interventions for groups of learners. Study includes an exploration of assessment tools for students in classroom settings. Appropriate instructional practices for groups of students will be explored.

RATIONALE
As a required portion (course III) of the literacy specialization in the Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning (ASTL) program, this course addresses required Virginia Department of Education and International Reading Association competencies for K-12 Reading Specialists. This course also provides an advanced, research-based study of literacy for teachers seeking master’s degrees.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY
This course uses a seminar format based on discussion of class topics and readings as well as related experiences and assignments from the classroom-based practicum. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session and to be prepared to engage in active dialogue and sharing of ideas. Activities will include small group discussions, presentations, whole class sharing, and reflection.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Required

Highly Recommended
Also helpful

Articles: Available electronically through GMU Library website (http://library.gmu.edu/, click on ‘e-reserves’ on the column on the right, click on ‘Search electronic reserves’, select the course (EDRD 632- section __6P1) and the instructor’s name (Debby Deal); enter the Password: reading).

BLACKBOARD
http://courses.gmu.edu/ using your GMU email user name and password.

Problems with blackboard should be directed to ITU Support. They can be reached by phone at 703-993-8870 or email at support@gmu.edu.

GSE SYLLABUS STATEMENTS OF EXPECTATIONS
The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:
Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See www.gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.
Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.
Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See http://mail.gmu.edu and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.
Note: To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to www.gmu.edu.

COURSE OUTCOMES
ASTL/Literacy Program Outcomes [International Reading Association (IRA) Standards]
Note: those in bold will be emphasized in this course.

1. Candidates have knowledge of the foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.
2. Candidates use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support reading and writing instruction.
3. Candidates use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading instruction.
4. Candidates create a literate environment that fosters reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, use of instructional practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and the appropriate use of assessments.
5. Candidates view professional development as a career-long effort and responsibility.
Course Outcomes (cont’d).

2.1 Candidates will use instructional grouping options (individual, small-group, whole-class, and computer-based) as appropriate for accomplishing given purposes. They will:

- Match instructional grouping options to specific instructional purposes that take into account developmental, cultural, and linguistic differences among students.
- Model and scaffold procedures so that students can work effectively. Provide evidence-based rationale for their selections.
- Support classroom teachers and paraprofessionals in their use of instructional grouping options. Help teachers select appropriate options.
- Demonstrate the options and explain the evidence-base for changing configurations to best meet the needs of all students.

2.2 Candidates will use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at differing stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They will:

- Plan for the use of a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, and methods, including technology-based practices. Make selections guided by an evidence-based rationale. Accommodate the developmental, cultural, and linguistic differences of their students.
- Support classroom teachers and paraprofessionals in the use of a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, and methods, including technology-based practices. Help teachers select appropriate options and explain the evidence-base for selecting practices to best meet the needs of all students.
- Demonstrate the options in their own teaching.

2.3 Candidates will use a wide range of curriculum materials in effective reading instruction for learners at different stages of reading and writing development and from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They will:

- Plan for the use of a wide range of curriculum materials. Make selections guided by an evidence-based rationale. Accommodate the developmental, cultural, and linguistic differences of their students.
- Support classroom teachers and paraprofessionals in the use of a wide range of curriculum materials. Help teachers select appropriate options and explain the evidence base for selecting practices to best meet the needs of all students.
- Demonstrate the options in their own teaching and in demonstration teaching.

4.1 Candidates will use students’ interests, reading abilities, and backgrounds as foundations for the reading and writing program. They will:

- Collect information about children’s interests and backgrounds. Use technology to gather and use the information in instructional planning. Use information collected when planning instruction.
- Select materials and help students select materials that match their reading levels, interests, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
• Assist the classroom teacher and paraprofessional in selecting materials that match the reading levels, interests, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students. Articulate the research that grounds their practice.

Virginia State Department of Education Outcomes:
Candidates will demonstrate expertise in:
• The use of formal and informal screening in the assessment of language, concepts of print, phoneme awareness, letter recognition, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, reading levels, comprehension
• The ability to use data to tailor instruction for acceleration, intervention, remediation and flexible level groupings.
• Strategies to increase vocabulary, reading comprehension, specifically in the ability to teach strategies to teach literal, interpretative, critical and evaluative comprehension.
• In teaching the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing and sharing).
• Measurement and evaluation (validity, reliability, normative comparisons; grade, age, and normal curve equivalents, percentile ranks and standard scores)

CLASS REQUIREMENTS
1. Class attendance is extremely important due to the interactive nature of the course. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, you must contact the instructor before class begins and leave a message. Two or more absences will likely result in a lowered grade because essential class work will be missed.

2. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities pertaining to literacy assessments and interventions, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.

3. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins.

4. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students may occasionally have serious circumstances arise that prevent the completion of work by the assigned due date. If such a dilemma arises, please contact the instructor in a timely fashion. If you do not let the instructor know in a timely fashion, points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late. Make sure you back up all your work. Papers may be sent via email only with the permission of the instructor.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If you are not confident of your own ability to catch errors, have another person proofread your work. The organization of your papers (e.g., headings organization, references, citations etc.) should follow APA style. When in doubt, check the APA manual: http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html
Portions of the APA manual also appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/.
Besides the specific criteria described in the assignments that follow, I will be grading your papers on four general criteria:

1. Clarity: Presentation of ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)

2. Organization and writing style: Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.

3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. Support your ideas with the concepts learned and developed in class and from your readings. Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.

4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Project, Part A: Attitudes or Motivation Survey</td>
<td>September 23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Project, Part B: Reading and Writing Assessment *</td>
<td>October 14</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Project, Part C: Assessment-driven Instructional Planning and Grouping*</td>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Preparation</td>
<td>November 11</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Discussions</td>
<td>As assigned</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*The above performance-based assessments are designed to provide evidence that program candidates meet **required program completion standards**. Successful completion of these performance-based assessments and a grade of B or better in the course are required to move to the next course in the ASTL/Literacy course sequence. **If you are concerned that you may be having difficulty meeting these standards, please speak to your course instructor and your advisor.** Also, note that you will be responsible for uploading these assignments to Taskstream (CEHD assessment system). Your final grade will be given only after your assignments are uploaded to Taskstream.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**TERM PROJECT, PART A: ASSESSMENTS OF ATTITUDES OR MOTIVATION FOR READING**

**General Information:** Part A includes 1) a blank copy of the assessment and 2) a report of your findings. Part B consists of three parts: 1) selection and administration of the assessments, 2) analysis of the data, and 3) conclusions based on the reading and writing assessments for your focus group and/or class. For Part C includes four parts: 1) instructional groups; 2) Objectives, skills, & strategies; 3) Rationale; and 4) Materials.)
Student group selection: Select a group of 4 to 6 students who represent as much as possible, the diversity of the class. For example, mix of girls and boys, achievement in reading, cultural/ethnic diversity etc. Choose students that vary in their reading achievement according to standardized test scores and classroom performance. Also, if possible, choose a student who is an English language learner or a struggling reader.

**Detailed description of Part A:**
1. Interest/Attitude Assessment: You may design, adapt or use an existing Interest/Attitude or Motivation for Reading survey (some of these will be shared and discussed in class).
   - Administer the survey to a focus group of students (4 to 6 students). Include a blank copy of the survey. You may want to administer the survey to your entire class to gain more insight into their interests.

2. Interest/Attitude Report: Suggested length: 3 pages
   - Provide an organized description of your students and their interests/attitudes and behaviors towards reading. You can complement the information from the survey with informal observation notes. For example:
     - Type of readers: What kind of readers are these children? How engaged or disengaged are they in reading? How many motivated readers do you think there are in the class? What is your evidence? (Be sure to cite your data)
     - Interests: What are their reading interests? What do they read at school? What do they read outside of school? When and where? How many of these children seek to read independently? What types of activities do they do after school? What are their interests?
     - Reading behaviors: How many children in your class check books out of the library? When do they read them (at home, at school, on the bus)? Do children discuss books with others (i.e. family, friends, care providers, teachers)? Do they have class time allotted for book discussions? Do they find extra time to read during the school day?

The goal of this description is for you to gather some initial information and gain some understanding of the reading interests, attitudes, motivations, and habits of your students.

**TERM PROJECT, PART B: ASSESSMENT OF READING AND WRITING**

**Detailed description of Part B:** Suggested length: 5-6 pages
1. Assessments: Your assignment will include one reading and one writing assessment.
   - Reading: Choose one of the following
     - (1) A teacher-made Informal Reading Inventory with a passage that you select (see guidelines for IRI process in Caldwell, Chapter 3);
     - (2) Another informal teacher-created measure that assesses two of the following:
       - Word recognition (e.g., running records)
• **Fluency** (adaptation of NAEP's rubric (BB); or any other adapted measure to assess fluency)

• **Oral reading comprehension** (a comprehension measure: such as retelling, answering questions (types); formulating own questions in relation to text; etc. specifying text genre)

• **Phonological and phonemic awareness and concepts of print** (these latter measures are applicable to emergent and early readers mostly).

**Writing:** This assessment consists of students' writing samples. Examples of these are multiple: graphic organizers; paragraphs; statements; compositions; note taking; a response to a specific prompt etc. (Rasinski’s and Padak’s book has multiple ideas that can be used or adapted). If possible, the writing prompt should be in relation to a text. This will facilitate your analysis of the writing sample. You can create a scoring guide or use an existing one. The writing sample should provide some type of information on your student's literacy development. For example, if you are assessing author's bias as part of comprehension of narrative texts, the sample would be a student’s answer to a prompt that reflects assessment of author's bias. However, if you are assessing a student's spelling development and recognition of first and last consonants your sample would respond to a prompt that captures that dimension of writing/word recognition.

Reading and Writing assessments should be organized in such a way that you include:

• A blank copy of each assessment

• Your writing for this section should include the following
  (a) A description/definition of each assessment used
  (b) Your rationale (the reason why) you used this assessment: Why is it important to assess this dimension of literacy? For example: Why would character development be important to assess in third-graders? Why is it necessary to assess reading fluency? You may want to use your texts and the discussions from class for your rationales (use cites when necessary).
  (c) How the assessments were administered (individual, whole class; directions etc.)

2. **Data Analysis:** *Please use pseudonyms describing students’ results.*

Your writing for this section will include:

(a) A description of the scores for your assessment. How were these scored? For example: did you use percentages? If so, describe them. Did you use miscue analyses? What were the miscue types? Did you use a writing rubric? What were the levels of the rubric?

(b) How scores were derived or obtained? For example, if miscue analyses were used, provide examples of how you coded some of the students’ miscues supporting your description in (a). If a rubric was used include this and describe how scores were assigned based on the rubric (again provide a few examples from your samples)
Note: (a) and (b) above are highly interrelated: (a) provides a description of the scores of your assessment; (b) provides examples from your assessment samples that back up your description in (a). When in doubt, assume the reader is not familiar with your assessment measures!

3. Conclusions:
In this section you will include a summary of your students’ strengths/weaknesses or needs in reading and writing, based on the information derived from the assessments. Your writing will include your understanding of your students’ strengths and weaknesses in each of the areas you assessed. Make sure you connect the information you present to the assessment information previously presented. Organize this section in your preferred format; however be systematic and organized in the presentation of information.

TERM PROJECT, PART C: INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Detailed description of Part C: Suggested length: 5-6 pages
Based on the results of the assessments used in Part B of the term project you will design a reading/language arts instructional plan for five days, which includes the following components:

1. Instructional grouping: Create instructional groups across the entire class or groups (pseudonyms will be used for students) with an explanation that will help other school personnel understand the rationale for the groupings. Be sure to cite your interests/attitude survey (part A) and reading and writing assessment data (Part B) for the groupings.

2. Objectives/goals, skills, and strategies: An overview of the objectives/goals, skills and strategies that will be targeted for each group with an explanation that will help other school personnel understand the rationale for the objectives, skills and strategies selected. Reading instructional strategies must include at least one specific reading strategy described in one of your textbooks or other sources you have used (such as strategy articles presented in class or other textbooks used for other assignments). Describe how you will implement the strategy and why you have selected this strategy (why is it appropriate; what will students learn based on assessment needs etc.). You must cite the author and page using APA 5 format.

3. Rationale: You can design your instruction in any group format/arrangement (e.g., small group most of the time; whole group half of the time, small group instruction the other half etc.), as long as you make clear how the instruction is meeting the students’ needs and strengths. To make this clear, include:
   - An explanation of how and why your instruction will meet the developmental/instructional and the cultural/linguistic needs of your students.
   - A detailed description of the modeling and scaffolding that might occur during the reading or language arts period for one of the groups for 5 days. This should be written so it can be used as guide for other school personnel.

4. Materials: Identify materials that will support sections 1, 2, and 3 and serve the needs of your students (e.g., books, manipulatives, science materials, portfolio activities, magazines, selected websites) and a description of how you will use these materials so that students have 1) choice, 2) appropriate scaffolding for any important material that is too difficult and 3) opportunity to read text that is appropriate for them. Make sure you include some type of
technology as part of your materials (if not available to your students, please include a brief description of what would you use if it were available) and multiple genres of books, including expository.

*Note:* You may want to create a graphic organizer that integrates sections 1, 2, 3, and 4.

**ARTICLE DISCUSSIONS**

Each student will be responsible for leading a discussion on two to three of the assigned readings for class. Readings include textbook chapters as well as assigned articles (from Reserves). The week before your discussion you should turn in your discussion plan, which includes:

(a) Main points/aspects of the article (assume your audience has read the article, so do not restate every detail and aspect of the article!). Make connections between this article/chapter and other class readings. This should be either be in bullets or a graphic organizer.

(b) A list of two to three higher level thinking questions for the class to discuss. Questions should elicit reflection as well as application of issues discussed.

Your grade on these discussions will be a total of 15 possible points. Your grade will be based on an average of (a) and (b) above and the overall number of articles you are assigned. A sign-up sheet for article discussions will be distributed early in the semester.

**TEST PREPARATION**

*For this assignment, you will need to select two focus students (one high, one low or ELL, one boy, one girl)*

1. **Observation:** Give a standardized reading test (see Calkins p. 20-21 for definition) to your class or a small group (Be sure to include students of varying reading levels). Make notes about the test taking behaviors of your focus students (this will help with your analysis).

2. **Interviews and Analysis:** After the test, interview your focus students to find out how each student approached the test. Create a list of starter questions such as:
   - What do you do first when you take a reading test?
   - What do you do next?
   - What do you do when you read a passage you don’t understand?
   - What do you do when you do when there seems to be more than one correct answer?
   - What do you do when you finish the test if there is extra time?

Ask the student to elaborate after each answer or ask relevant follow-up questions, as Calkins et al did in the text. Take notes during the interview. Write a 2-3 page analysis paper based on what you learned from observing your students take a test and from interviewing them afterward. How were the two students test taking approaches similar/different? (You can show this with a Venn diagram). Based on your data what test-taking strategies discussed in the text would be appropriate for each student? Why? Be sure to use examples from your observations and interview data. Attach your interview questions and notes to the analysis paper.

3. **Intervention and reflection:** Plan and teach a mini-lesson using one of the recommended test-taking strategies. Write a 1-2 page reflection, which includes the following:
• What do you think students learned from this mini-lesson that will help them take tests?
• What part of the mini-lesson was successful? How do you know?
• What part of the mini-lesson needs to be revised? How will you revise it?
• What test-taking strategy would you teach next? Why?
• What did you learn from this experience?
• Based on your readings and this experience, when you are a Reading Specialist, what would you tell classroom teachers about test taking preparation?
# EDRD 632 Class Schedule (Tentative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>Overview of Instructional framework for assessment</td>
<td>Caldwell: Chapter 1; Chapter 2 (p. 15-27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caldwell: Chapter 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interest/Attitude Assessments</td>
<td>Choice of one article:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>Reading Assessment Part I: Emergent literacy</td>
<td>Caldwell: Chapters 4, 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Choice of:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Next Class: Bring narrative trade books and textbooks. (See Appendices A &amp; B in Harvey &amp; Goudvis)</td>
<td>Strickland &amp; Strickland (2000). Making Assessment Elementary (Ch. 4: Writing Assessment). Or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DUE: Term Project, Part A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 5</td>
<td>Reading Assessment Part II: Narrative texts</td>
<td>Caldwell: Chapter 2 (p. 27-32, 42-48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 30</td>
<td>• Rubric development</td>
<td>Caldwell: Chapter 3 (Informal Reading Inventory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Informal Reading Inventory (IRI)</td>
<td>Next Class: Bring expository trade books and textbooks to class. (See Appendices A &amp; B in Harvey &amp; Goudvis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 6</td>
<td>Reading Assessment Part</td>
<td>Caldwell: 3 and 7 (review)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Oct. 7       | III: Expository texts  
|            | • Rubric development  
|            | • Vocabulary assessment  
|            | • Comprehension strategies  
| Class 7 Oct. 14 | Fluency assessment  
|            | Caldwell: Chapter 6 (fluency)  
|            | Articles TBA  
|            | **DUE: Term Project, Part B**  
| Class 8 Oct. 21 | Standardized assessments  
|            | Caldwell: Chapter 9  
|            | Calkins: Part I  
| Class 9 Oct. 28 | Test Preparation  
|            | Calkins: Part III  
| Class 10 Nov. 4 | Reporting & interpreting classroom data  
|            | Caldwell: Chapter 10  
|            | Calkins: Part IV  
| Class 11 Nov. 11 | English Language Learners  
|            | • Reading instruction and vocabulary  
|            | • Assessment issues  
|            | **DUE: Test-taking and Preparation Paper**  
| Class 12 Nov. 18 | Instructional Grouping Options based on Diagnostic Reading Assessments  
|            | Discussion of Term Projects Part B & (projection for) Part C  
|            | Readings TBA  
| Nov. 26 | **Thanksgiving recess**  
| Class 13 Dec. 2 | No Class  
|            | I will be attending NRC  
|            | Work on Term Project Part C: Instructional plan based on assessments.  
| Class 14 Dec. 9 | Integrated reading instruction  
|            | **DUE: Term Project, Part C**  